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TARRANT COUNTY.

Something About Its Early History and What it is To-day.

Mr. F. W. Dumble, editor of the Lampasas Leader, furnishes THE GAZETTE with a page of the first history of Tarrant county, which came to him in the shape of manuscript from the hands of James J. Beeman one of the first settlers here. Mr. Dumble writes:

When leaving his manuscript with me Mr. Beeman said: "I leave this in your charge as a legacy to my children. I have nothing else for them but a father's blessing. If they are worth anything publish them, you will use your own judgment." I have not had the time to examine these papers closely, but in skimming through

find some points of fact in the instory of Tarrant county that have never been published. The manuscript is headed "A Partial History of the Life of James J. Beeman, " and was written during the later years of his useful life, at those odd moments when after the god of day had sunk to rest leaving the rosy golden twilight of our western hills, that time when memory wanders back and recalls the sweet or the sad of our lives, the good or the evil deeds that we have done. Back to this time would be go and then with one hand clasped in the one of her's who had shared all of his tolls and ease, who had been the soul of his soul, he would with the other write the recollections of those days that tried men's souls and made women angels The manuscript is written waveringly yet clear and distinct. It shows that the hand, though weak, the heart and the brain were warm and urged the writer

James J. Beeman was born in Illinois on December 21, 1816, at the head of the American bottom, in Madison county, about three miles below the city of Alton. When quite young his father removed to Green county, where he was raised. In 1836 he was married to Sarah Crawford, and by her had three children. He left Illinois in September, 1840, in company with his brother, John Beeman and family, and nephew, J. S. Beeman and family, crossing the boundary line of the United States and Tomaton the 8th of December of the They located first in Boy on what was known as the Si h farm, about three miles east Dalby Springs. In the spring of Indians raided the upper counti a company was raised te go in parsuit of them. Brigadier-General E. H. Tarrant, commanding the volunteers of the brigade district composed of Cass, Bowie, Red River, Lamar and Fannin counties, with their territories, headed the expedition. They came upon an Indian village on Village creek, in what is now Tarrant county, and attacked the inhabitants. In the fight Colonel John B. Denton was killed and Captain Henry Stout wounded. Mr. Beeman does not say how the fight terminated, but from later remarks I would infer that they were worsted. After the fight the company returned to the settlements, carrying the dead body of Colonel Denton with them, burying it on Denton creek, at which place he rested until some six

short while after the reof the expedition, General Tarrant issued orders for the raising of some 400 volunteers to go out on the headwaters of the Trinity river against the Indians. Each of the counties in the district was to furnish a cerumber of men, organize and elect ompany officers, and to meet at English, in Fannin county, on July

1. The men were to furnish their se, gun, ammunition and rations. wie company, of which Mr. Bees a member, met at the town of alb on July 5 and elected P. Key captain and ier Booth orderly sergeant. ne following in his own language ot improve it; it is more interest-

not now remember the names of officers of the company. We nded, to meet at Fort English th where we elected battalion whom I deem it unimportant , only that General Tarrant nander-in-chief and Jonathan ergeant-major. We immedion the march for the Indian illage creek. When we got ndians had left. We found a sign, as they would come of their crops that were There was corn, pump-. Perhaps now I ought to lent that occurred before inglish, which is as

Alabama man living near

med Cox had a little boy and a near the same size, who were t of both mounting a pony and cows up of evenings. It was ening before we started on the at the boys were sent for the ual and while out the Indians them and captured them and carried them off. They were in the fall, same year, and told Indians kept far enough ahead o be out of danger and watched ements. They told the boys that f an attack from us they would a. Poor little fellows they sufgreat deal as the Indians whipped verely. I dare say if still living y have the marks on their backs to this time, December 1, 1886. On our arrival in the village we encamped in their filds and helped ourselves to the corn, beans, etc. One of our men made a grater out of an old coffee pot, on which we grated meal and baked beans, the first bread I had tasted for a good while. We called it 'bready,' as bread was not a good enough name. Up to this time

our rations consisted of cold flour, bacon They waited three or four days for Ceneral Tom I. Smith, but as he did not arrive at the appointed time General Tarant gave orders to move forward. On first day, while they were nooning on amore creek, two miles east of Fort th, some of the horses stampeded went back to the

The squad sent hem found General Smith ig the ground General Tarrant cated that morning. The squad ed up the horses and drove them their camp, bearing with them a e from General Smith to General t asking to see him. After the ation and procuring several head cattle, General Tarrant returned



to his command and continued the march up the West Fork.

The brothers of the boys put fire to the Bird's Fort was established:

and nephew and families, A. W. Webb. was sent out to meet the wagons that had Solomon Silkwood, Henry Hahn and gone to the settlements for provisions, On the next day we stopped in a grove | their families together with some few | and to bring back the body of Rattan. It to noon and found a pile of wood single men moved to Bird's Fort and was nine days from the time ready for the fire. This the little boys | built themselves, for those times, com- they left the fort antil they afterward said they had prepared and the fortable houses. Then follows the ac- returned with the body for burial. Indian spies came in and reported our count of their first tragedy. "On Rattan had a faithful dog. "When the coming, whereupon they left in haste. Christmas day, 1841, Captain Webb, men found him he was guarded by his Soloman Silkwood and W. H. Rattan left | dog. He had stayed by him and kept pile and cooked their direcr. What a | the fort and went over on Elm Fork to | the buzzards off. They said the dog was tale could be drawn from this one inci- cut another road below the mouth of frantic he was so glad to see them. All dent? What must have been the Denton creek so as to avoid crossing the the other dogs left and went back to the feelings of those captive boys streams, which the present road did. fort. Poor old Watch died the next sumknowing their rescuers, their kinspeople | They got on Elm Fork the same day they | mer in Lamar county, near Paris, and were so near, and yet they must go on, left the fort and camped on the opposite | Polly, with the help of Dow Brown, driven by the lash and tortured almost | side. That night it snowed and continued | Hamp's little nephew, dug a grave and beyond endurance. Spartan youths were snowing the next day and buried old Watch as a last rite for the weaklings compared to those who gave | was very cloudy. This was the faithfulness of so good a dog." They their blood, their lives, their all to the 26th day of December, '41. While they founding of our grand state-Texas! were going up the river looking for a Texas veteral!-proudest name in all suitable place to make a ford they came history! The march was continued up on a bear track, and found it had gone West Fork till Clear Fork was reached. I up a big cottonwood tree and had not They then followed this to the "upper | come down. They concluded they would cross timbers' where they found a large | cut the tree down and have a bear fight | spring. Here some time before Cook had | with the dogs they had with them. They camped on his way to Santa Fe, N. M. began chopping the tree, but thinking it This spring is where Cartersville, in Par- | dinner time they are their dinnner. After ker county, is now located. Not finding | dinner, Hamp, as we called him, (W. the Indians as expected all lay by and H. Rattan) went to chopping, but did terspersed with amusing incidents and sent out spies. When they came back not hit many licks until the In-reported no Indians. By this time dians who were watching them, their supplies were nearly exhausted, shot three times at them, the and their cattle dying with the murrain | first bail killing Hamp. After consulting | best watered county in Texas, is one of they were compelled to return to the set- | they (Webb and Silkwood) deemed best | the central counties of the state. It is tlements. He continues and tells how to leave as Hamp was now dend, but be- thirty miles square containing 900 square fore starting Silkwood shot at what he | miles or 576,000 acres. Its northern line "We had enlisted for three months' took to be an Indian's head. This is sixty-five miles from Red River; its service, the time not being out when we ended the fight and they made southern line 330 miles from the Gulf of got home. Major Jonathan Bird got per- their way to the fort without Mexico; its eastern line 240 miles from mission from General Tarrant to raise a | any more trouble with the Indians. On | the Sabine river, and its western line 590 company out of the furloughed soldiers | their arrrival about 10 o'clock in the | miles from the Rio Grande. The Trinity and go back to West Fork and build a night, they imposed on me the task of river and the West and Clear forks of the fort near the village. He raised the com- informing his wife of the fate of Hamp. same run through the county. The pany and as I had seen the country my It was hard, but I went in the house | names and lengths of the streams waterbrother took my place. They went and built the fort on the north side of West Fork, about seven or eight miles from your boy, and then said I had bad news Sycamore, 15 miles; Village creek,

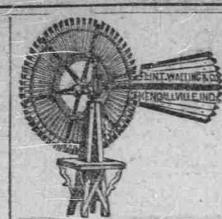
the village and about the same distance | to tell her. She says, 'What is it?' I | 20 miles; Rush creek, 9 miles;

were notified in March, 1842, that the congress of Texas had granted them "six miles square, embracing the fort, but General Sam Houston vetoed the act." He follows now with the history of the settling of Dallas and Lamar counties, giving many facts in detail not as yet published. These items are of historical interest, not only to that city and those counties, but to the whole of Texas and the United states. The manuscript is inlittle romances.

Tarrant county, one of the five richest, most productive, most prosperous and the

below Birdville. The fort was named said Webb and Silkwood had come back Trading House creek, 11 miles; Fish Bird's Fort for the major.'' Upon and said the Indians had killed Hamp. creek, 6 miles; Cedar Mountain creek, the completion of the forthis brother It was so shocking it seemed she would 1614 miles; Big Bear creek, 15 miles; returned to Bowie county where they go crazy. Shocking news, indeed!" Little Bear creek, 8 miles; Denton creek, were living and after gathering their The next day a detail composed of John 3 miles; Elizabeth creek, 9 miles; Hencrops he, with his family, his brother | S. Beeman, Henry Hahn and - Heath, | rietta creek, 10 miles; Big Fossil creek, FROM JNG. FORNEY'S BOK.
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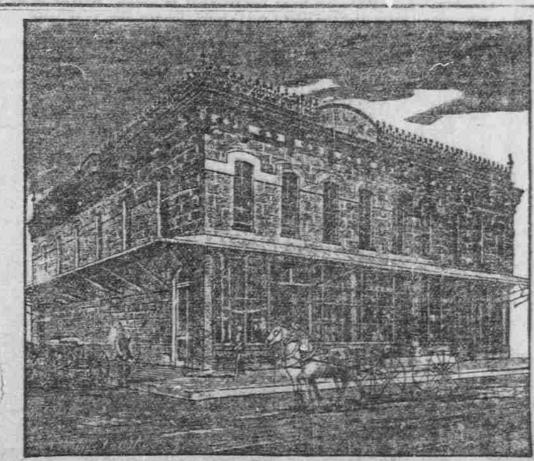
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